

REMARKS

Upon entry of the above amendment, claims 1-3, 5, 8-11, 13, and 16-17 will have been amended to enhance the clarity of the claims without narrowing the scope thereof, and for reasons unrelated to patentability. Further, no claims will have been newly added and no claims will have been canceled.

In view of the herein contained amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action together with the allowance of all of the claims pending herein, in due course.

Initially, Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging Applicant's claim for foreign priority and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document. Applicant also notes with appreciation the Examiner's consideration of the documents cited in the Information Disclosure Statement, filed on November 20, 2001.

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 9, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by NAKAMURA (U.S. Patent 6,476,851). Further, claims 2 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over NAKAMURA. In addition, the Examiner rejected claims 3-6, 8, 11-14, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over NAKAMURA in view of SASAKI (U.S. Patent 5,408,265).

Applicant respectfully traverses the above-noted rejections and submits that they are inappropriate with respect to the combination of features recited in each of Applicant's claims.

For example, NAKAMURA does not disclose or suggest, inter alia, at least a predetermined circuit, as recited in the claims. In setting forth the rejection, the Examiner asserts that the predetermined circuit is the intricate circuitry of the CCD. However, Applicant respectfully submits that NAKAMURA does not disclose, mention, or suggest any such intricate circuitry of the CCD, as suggested by the Examiner, or any circuit for that matter, that outputs a signal from the image sensor and is arranged along the periphery of the light receiving surface of the image sensor (i.e., CCD) on the base. Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, there is no disclosure of a circuit or even a mention of the term, 'circuit', in NAKAMURA. Thus, the rejection of the claims based upon NAKAMURA is deficient and improper.

Rather, NAKAMURA is merely directed towards correcting distortion and preventing shading via the objective lens system and the image sensor. NAKAMURA, however, is not directed towards, inter alia, providing a predetermined circuit that receives a signal from the image sensor and is arranged along the periphery of the image sensor to substantially align a center of the base of the image sensor with a center of the effective imaging region of the image sensor, as required by the pending claims.

Moreover, the passage of NAKAMURA (i.e., column 15, lines 2-14) relied upon by the Examiner does not provide any support for a rejection of the features recited in the claims. The passage cited in NAKAMURA is merely directed towards an embodiment in which the second lens unit is aligned with the center of the CCD. However, the alignment disclosed in NAKAMURA is not between a center of a base and the center of the image sensor, but between a center of a lens (i.e., optical axis) and a center of the CCD. Since NAKAMURA does not disclose or even suggest the combination of features recited in at least each of the Applicant's independent claims, for this additional reason, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested together with a passage of the instant application to issue.

Additionally, Applicant respectfully submits that NAKAMURA does not disclose or suggest at least the configuration of an image sensor and a predetermined circuit mounted on a base, as recited in combination with the other features of the claims. In the rejection, the Examiner interprets the glass cover (i.e., element 85 of Figure 18) to be the base. However, Applicant respectfully submits that the glass cover does not serve as a base to at least an image sensor, but that the glass cover is a protective surface provided atop of the image sensor. Further, the glass cover does not and should not have a circuit thereon. Accordingly, due to the inappropriateness of the rejection, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration of the claims pending in the present application.

Furthermore, Applicant submits that SASAKI, alone or in combination, also fails to disclose or suggest at least a predetermined circuit arranged along the periphery of the light receiving surface of the image sensor on the base so that a center of the base on the light receiving surface of the image sensor is substantially aligned with a center of the effective imaging region of the image sensor. Since the applied references do not disclose or even suggest the combination of features recited in each of the claims, Applicant requests a withdrawal of the rejection.

For at least each of the reasons discussed above, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and an indication of the allowability of each of the claims in the present application.

Thus, in view of the amendments and arguments herein, Applicant submits that claims 1 and 9 are in condition for allowance. With regard to dependent claims 2-8 and 10-17, Applicant submits that they are allowable on their own merit, as well as because they depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 1 or 9, which Applicant has shown to be allowable.

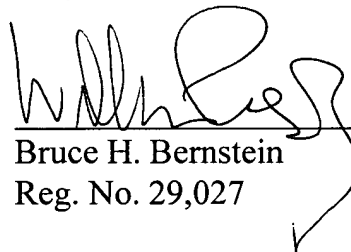
Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims in the present application are clearly patentable over the references applied by the Examiner, either alone or in combination, and an indication to such effect is respectfully requested.

SUMMARY

Applicant believes that the present application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully requests an indication to that effect. Applicants have argued the allowability of the claims and pointed out the shortcomings of the applied references. Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action and allowance of the present application and all the recited claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,  
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